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Date: MAR 17 2017

Subject: Travel Management Rule (TMR) Implementation

To: Forest and Grassland Supervisors

The Rocky Mountain Region has made tremendous strides in implementing the Travel Management Rule (36 CFR 212) since its establishment in 2005. I want to thank you for your continued efforts. With the emergence of new direction on Subpart C and observations of ongoing decisions regarding roads and motorized use across the region, it is time to bring renewed focus on requirements of the rule. This letter details my expectations for continuing implementation of the Travel Management Rule and its three subparts:

- A. Travel analysis and identification of the Minimum Road System (MRS);
- B. Motor vehicle use designation of National Forest System roads, trails, and areas, and;
- C. Over-snow vehicle use designations for National Forest System roads, trails, and areas.

To date, a science-based Travel Analysis Report (TAR) has been completed for each unit within the Region that identifies recommendations for a Minimum Road System and roads that may be decommissioned or closed (per Subpart A); Forests have published a Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM), with some undergoing new planning efforts (Subpart B); and the Region will soon be moving towards producing Over-Snow Vehicle Use Maps (OSVUM) or undertaking planning efforts to designate roads, trails, and areas open to over-snow vehicles (Subpart C).

First, I must be clear that the Subpart A requirement for identification of the MRS was not completed when the TAR was published. The result of the TAR is a recommendation only. Formal identification of the MRS requires a road management decision, which is subject to compliance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other environmental laws, including the Endangered Species Act and National Historic Preservation Act. Forests should update their TARs over time as road management decisions evolve and the transportation system incrementally moves towards the desired social, economic, and environmentally sustainable road system needed for the safe and efficient travel and for administration, utilization, and protection of National Forest System lands.

Second, travel management decisions that change the status of roads, trails, or areas open to motorized use from that established in initial MVUMs, whether the decision is part of an integrated resource project, or a stand-alone travel management project are Subpart B decisions which require updating the MVUM and compliance with NEPA.



Finally, production of an OSVUM requires a thoughtful analysis of the previous winter recreation decisions and may require a new analysis and travel management decision prior to publication. These decisions may be independent, sequential, or concurrent and vary in scope from a single watershed to an entire National Forest or Grassland. All must include compliance with NEPA and other environmental laws, as well as robust public involvement.

I recognize that the above direction is complex. Therefore, to ensure future success in implementing the TMR, I have reinstituted the Regional Travel Management Board (TM Board) to provide advice, guidance, and support to the field. The TM Board is composed of the Directors of Recreation, Lands, and Minerals (RLM), Engineering (ENG), Strategic Planning (SP), and Renewable Resources (RR). The TM Board has in turn formed a TM Working Group that includes:

Scott Haas, Regional Trails and Dispersed Recreation Program Manager (RLM)

David Loomis, Regional NEPA Program Manager (SP)

Stanley Mason, Regional Soil Scientist (RR)

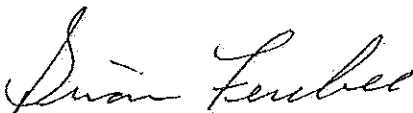
Veronica Mitchell, Regional Transportation Planning and Development Engineer (ENG)

It is my expectation that your Forest travel management teams mirror the regional teams through engagement in all aspects of the TMR process.

Look for more detailed guidance and development of training modules for all parts of the TMR in the coming months.

Thank you again for your continuing attention to sound implementation of the Travel Management Rule. Successful implementation is vitally important to the people we serve and the resources we manage. As you continue to identify and implement MRS decisions, implement motorized designations, and revise decisions under the TMR, please coordinate your planning efforts with the TM Board.

Please contact Jim Bedwell at (303)275-5135 or jbedwell@fs.fed.us with any questions.



BRIAN FEREBEE
Regional Forester

cc: Scott Haas, Jim Bedwell, Stanley Mason, Steve Lohr, Dave Loomis, Doug Wise, Veronica Mitchell, Mary DeAgüero